APPARATUS AND METHODS FOR CONTROLLING
THE TRANSMISSION OF MESSAGES

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

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The invention provides systems, mechanisms and techniques for controlling transmission of outbound messages, such as e-mail or other types of messages, onto a computer network from an originator computer system. In operation, computer users operating an originator computer system can connect to connection equipment configured

10 according to the invention. The connection equipment can authenticate and authorize the connection for the computer user and can capture and map originator network address information assigned to the originator computer system to originator identity information associated with a user account used to establish the connection. Subsequently, when the computer user operates the originator computer system in an attempt to transmit an

15 outbound message onto a computer network to one or more recipients, a quota server of the invention can detect the outbound message and can obtain an originator address of the outbound message. The quota server can the obtain the originator identity mapped to the originator address and can further obtain message count and message limit information associated with the originator identity. The quota server can then determine if the

20 message count exceeds the message limit for the originator identity associated with the outbound message. If the message count exceeds the message limit, the quota server denies transmission of the outbound message. If the message count does not exceed the message limit, the quota server increments the message count by the number of recipients to which the outbound message is directed and allows transmission of the outbound

25 message to recipients, so long as the number of recipients does not exceed the difference between the message limit and the message count. Since the invention controls message transmission from a sending or origination point prior to the messages being transmitted on the computer network, resources of a computer network are conserved and the invention prevents computer users from transmitting large amounts of outbound

30 messages in excess of the message limits.